

UNVEILING BLOODY BUDDHISM

Far from the western perception of a peaceful religion, the history of Tibetan Buddhism tells a story of oppression and bloodshed, comparable with the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

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Extracted from her book *Unveiling Tibetan Buddhist Propaganda and Atrocities. A Way For Progress In The Tibet/China Conflict*

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THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN INTRODUCED BUDDHISM AND PRE-BUDDHIST INDIGENOUS SYSTEMS

The idea that Buddhism may have been involved in assassinations, political intrigues, matricide, fratricide, infanticide, sibling rivalry for the throne, witch-hunts, inquisitions, large-scale torture and genocide may shock many westerners. It shocked me too when I first realised that the political history of Tibet is just like every other nation in this regard. The idea thrown out by the proliferation of Buddhist literature is something I wanted to believe in. I wanted to believe the official Buddhist account of how Buddhism became the ruling theocracy in Tibet—that it was a conquest solely by ideology and debate. I wanted to believe that Shakyamani Buddha, the year after his enlightenment (approximately 460 BC) publicly debated the virtues of the Kalachakra Tantra with the King of Shambhalla, Dawa Sangpo, a Shivite also known as Sucandra. Convinced by the inspiring discourse, both king and country and eventually the whole of Tibet gave up its previous warlike ways and began to practice meditation and loving-kindness.^{1,2}

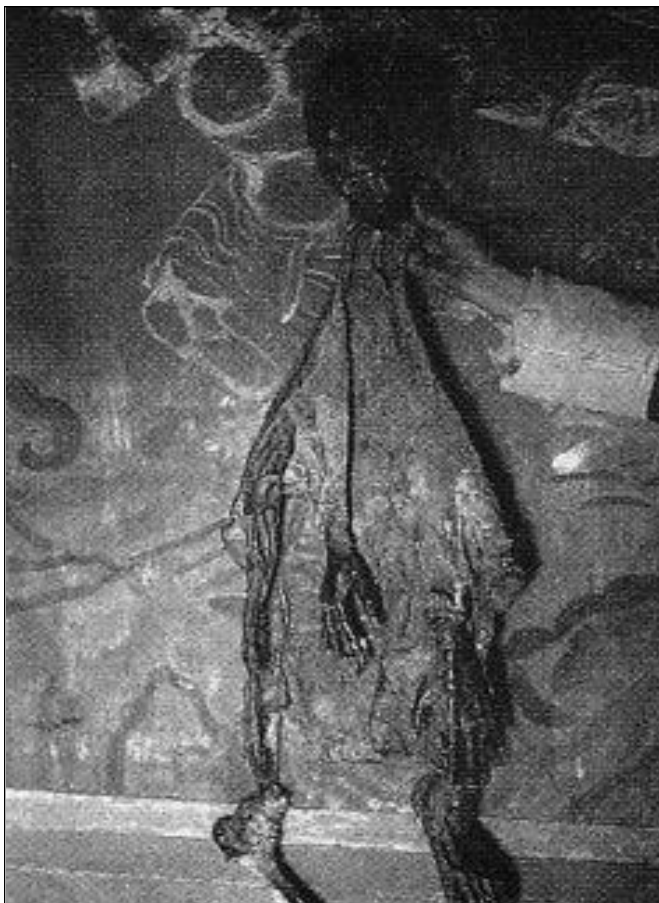
By this official story, we have been lead to believe that Buddhism became the theocracy in Tibet by a peaceful takeover of the hearts and minds of a savage, war-weary, uneducated people that had no spiritual beliefs. This is simply not the historical case. Buddhism's ascension to power is just as bloody as the Catholic Church. The Kalachakra had nothing to do with Buddhism's introduction into Tibet. Historically a Brahmin boy, Tsi-lu-pa was teaching the Kalachakra as a Hindu instrument in India AD 966. This unconverted Brahmin boy taught his chronological system to the Indian Buddhist Na-ro-pa, who eventually introduced it into Tibet in AD 1026.³ That means the Kalachakra Tantra did not reach Tibet until 1,486 years after the time stated in the official Buddhist propaganda story as quoted above. In fact Buddhism only became the official state religion of Tibet 400 years ago. That is not very long when compared with many other governments. Buddhism has only been the state religion of Tibet for the same period of time as the Church of England has been a state religion. If this much of the official Buddhist story is incorrect, should we in the west continue to accept such syrupy stories without question, and without corroborating evidence?

FIRST HAND ACCOUNT

I first began to question the official Buddhist line after meeting Kushog, a very old Tibetan woman. She was a disenfranchised Tibetan shaman from the Kham provinces. She had become a refugee from Buddhist persecution and had fled Tibet about 60 years ago, before the Chinese occupation. She fled to Kashmir and finally to Australia. She told me tales of how the practitioners of the indigenous belief system she sometimes called Dong-ba, were imprisoned or skinned alive *en masse* by the Buddhist monks and how the skins were hung to dry in the streets of Lhasa. The indigenous shamans there were not as we would view shaman from a western perspective. Kushog described a time when they were the literati. They educated the children of wealthy families. They were the mathematicians, the scribes, the scientists, the astronomers, the chronographers, the historians, the oracles, the public celebrants, the psychiatrists and healers, whose job it was to restore the natural balance to the wheel of life and time (different to the Kalachakra which is an imported Indian belief) whenever things became too lopsided. They gave advice on law, agriculture, architecture, and a style of what we call in the west feng-shui. Local officials often patronised them.



Picture 1: Flayed human skins from Tibetan monasteries on display in China.



Picture 2: A 400-year-old small human skin, possibly a child, located in a Tantric chamber at Bhutanese Monastery on the road between Mendegang and Tongsa, kept on a trophy wall with other human and power animal remains. It dates to the time of the first Anti-Shamanist edict. Photo by Reinhold Messner

The better the shaman, the higher the official he/she served but he/she was still accessible to the public for a price. Kushog said that, just like the shaman, the Buddhist would also charge for these services and they would charge a lot more as they had to support the whole monastery, not just themselves. She also claimed that they were not as effective. For instance, if a couple wanted to be married, a fee was paid to the monastery of the officiating Lama. Not only was the officiating Lama honoured and fed for the several days' celebration, but the new couple were under obligation to feed and shelter every member of that monastery as well, for the duration of the celebration. This was understandably a big burden for any new family and having a shaman officiate was often the economic thing to do. Shamans were also the preference if the couple wanted to have a traditional Tibetan-style wedding or one they felt would be more powerful as it appeased the spirits of the hearth and home. She claims that the shamans were seen as competition for business and so the Buddhists spread rumours that the shamans were evil and were assisted by demons.

Eventually enough fear was generated to justify a genocidal atrocity even though the shamans were generally regarded as good-hearted people who were respected by the community. Kushog claimed that this mass persecution of the indigenous shamans had happened several times since the sixth century.

She claimed that due to this persecution, many shamans took on a thin veneer of Buddhist beliefs for their own protection. Others found that this newly generated fear of them afforded some protection so they began to play the role of the powerful magician who is best just left alone. However these things were not enough to allow them to live unmolested.

HISTORICAL INTOLERANCE AND BANISHMENT

Contrary to their doctrines of tolerance, love and understanding, 1577 marked the first anti-shamanist edict by the Mongolian Khan under Buddhist pressure. The atrocities against the shamans began. There are more records of the persecution of the shamans in Mongolia than in Tibet. As the third Dalai Lama was the teacher of the Altan Khan and encouraged this edict, there is little doubt that the persecution took place in Tibet as well.

The Kalachakra Tantra tells a tale that echoes Kushog's own account of her exile from Tibet. The first Kalki king, Manjushri, preached the Kalachakra Tantra to his subjects in the newly converted Buddhist "Shambhala" (this could be a different place to the pre-existing "Shambhalla" referred to in the Hindu Vedas and by other pre-Buddhists writers).

There was a protest against this by a group of 35 million Rishis (mystics/seers/magicians) led by the sage Suryaratha. The magical Rishis worshipped only the sun as did Pythagoras' alti-shaman companion Abaris who, according to the writings of Porphyry and Imablicus, left his country at the same time that this incident was supposed to have occurred. Manjushri demanded that the Rishis adopt the teachings of the Kalachakra Tantra this way "...if you wish to enter this path, stay here, but if you do not, then leave and go elsewhere..."⁴ The Rishis replied: "...we all want to remain true to the 'sun chariot', we also do not wish to give up our religion and to join another".⁵

They chose banishment from Shambhala rather than follow Buddhism. This account probably echoes the real confrontation between the indigenous beliefs of the alti-Himalayan shaman and the new Buddhist school of thought. The fact they also say that they "...want to remain true to the sun chariot..." implies that there were fundamental differences in these two time philosophies, that this new Kalachakra was not the old time philosophy as taught by the indigenous practitioners.

BUDDHIST INFANTICIDE, BLACK MAGIC, DEATH SPELLS AND CANNIBALISM

There is a Buddhist concept that it is an honourable deed to deliver the world from people who will, in the future, prove to be evil. Padmasambhava, the founder of Tibetan Buddhism, set an example for this when, in his childhood, he killed a boy whose future abominable deeds he foresaw. These evils and abominable deeds are explained by the Lamas as acts of non-Buddhist shamanism (i.e. not approved Buddhist shamanism) and of non-Buddhist magic. When I have spoken to western Lamas about this appalling concept, in a nation dedicated to enlightenment, these supposed compassionate and venerable teachers have the same pre-programmed response: "But the shamans and Bon-po were evil and they deserved it." This response shocked me the first time I heard it, as I was led to believe that the Buddhists did not believe that anything was evil, only unenlightened.

Secularly we have reports of the Tibetan Buddhist government skinning people alive as late as 1912.⁶ There are also the now infamous letters displayed in the Tibetan Social and Historical Relics Exhibition in the Beijing Cultural Palace of Nationalities along with amputated limbs, the flayed human skins and torture implements. One letter on display attracted most attention. It reads:

"Rab Ge: A Buddhist ceremony will be held here. We need meat, hearts and blood from all kinds of animals, four human heads, intestines, pure blood, turbid blood, earth from ruins, the menstrual blood of a widow, the blood of a leper, water from beneath the surface of the earth, earth raised in a whirlwind, brambles growing towards the north, excrement of both dog and man and the boots of a butcher. All these should be sent to Tsechykhang on the 27th.
—Tsechykhang, the 19th."

Its authenticity is not disputed. The Buddhists claim that all of these things were harvested quickly from fresh corpses. Other similar letters have recently become known that require vast numbers of human pieces for major rituals. It is hard to imagine that large quantities of fresh human pieces could be harvested quickly from corpses that just happened to conveniently die a natural death all at the same time.

Kushog's accusations would appear to be supported by passages from the Hevajra Tantra:

"After having announced the intention to the guru and accomplished beings... perform with mercy the rite of killing of one who is a non-believer of the teachings of the Buddha and the detractors of the gurus and Buddhas. One should eliminate such a

person, visualizing his form as being upside-down, vomiting blood, trembling and with hair in disarray. Imagine a blazing needle entering his back. Then by envisioning the seed-syllable of the fire element in his heart he is killed instantly".⁷

The Guhyasamaja Tantra also instructs the infliction of murderous injuries upon opponents of Buddhism. "One draws a man or a woman in chalk or charcoal or similar. One projects an ax in the hand. Then one projects the way in which the throat is slit".⁸ Once the enemy is thus bewitched he can then be poisoned, enslaved, or paralysed.

Similar things are found in the Kalachakra Tantra where an adept is urged to murder those who violated the Buddhist teachings. The text requires, however, that this be carried out with compassion.⁹

Are these calls to murderous acts in the Tantras motivated by pure compassion and a transformatory intent or elimination of the

competition as the exile Kushog suggested? Another dimension is added when you consider that in the Guhyasamaja Tantra the destruction of another magical being allows the Tantric practitioner to absorb their power and to eventually become a demi-god. Using pieces of your destroyed opponent as ritual implements or eating their flesh is supposed to magnify this effect. "Afterwards pills are to be made from his flesh, the consumption of which grants, among other things, the siddhis [powers/psychic abilities] of 'sky-walking'. Such pills are in fact still being distributed today. The heart-blood is especially sought after, and the skull of the killed... also possesses magical powers".¹⁰

"The Grove Of Delights" is a ritual from the Buddhist Kagyutpa Chod tradition distributed on CD format from <http://www.tibetan-institute.org/> in which the practitioners collect together (in a visualisation, I hope, though it is not stated as such) old men, women and children, skin them alive, chop them up and then pile bits and blood on the skins in a ritualistic fashion.

This form of practice would be labelled as the blackest of magic here

in the west. People who perform such things as child sacrifice, black magic with the intent to kill and cannibalism are jailed as the criminals they are. The public claims of the Buddhists being pacific and seeking enlightenment for all beings have the hollow ring of hypocrisy when viewed in context with these criminal practices.

THE CONFLICT WITH THE BON-PO

These shamans should not be confused with the Bon-Po. The shamans came from the time of the original indigenous belief system and lived quite compatibly with the later Bon-Po who appeared to arise from a mix of local beliefs with Chinese Taoism. The Bon-Po established monasteries in Tibet long before the arrival of the Buddhists.

Historically, the first king in Tibet to accept Buddhism was King Khri Srong-lde'ti-btsan. He was converted by his Chinese Buddhist wife who was determined to establish a form of Buddhism in her new country.

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In 778, not long after Padmasambhava had come to Tibet, this king organised a public debate between the Bon-Po, the Tibetan indigenous monastic order, and the new Buddhists who were trying to establish their first monasteries. The process of building monasteries was expensive. The people were not supporting the new religion. At the advice of his geomantic wife, King Khri Srong-Ide-ti-btsan had paid for and built the first Buddhist monastery on Tibet's main ley line, over the heart of what was considered the motherly protective spirit of the land, Srin-mo. Srin-mo was the shamans' main magical spirit or dra-lha, their mother earth, from which they drew their power. To this day, Jokhang Temple in Lhasa houses a huge Phur-Ba dagger still plunged into her heart.

The Bon-Po already had monasteries in some high-energy places where the king's wife wanted him to place other monasteries in order to completely pin down this spirit. He came up with a plan, the result of which was an intense persecution of the Bon-Po described by them in this way:

"It is said that Buddhist scholars were able to defeat [in a debate] the Bon-Po convincingly. This enabled the King to do away with Bon. He started persecuting the Bon-Po. He called all Bon priests together and gave

them the choice of becoming Buddhist monks or tax-paying citizens. If neither of the two alternatives was acceptable, they should leave the country.He also threatened to put to death those who had turned Buddhist... into Bon... Many of the smaller shrines of the Bon-Po are reported to have been destroyed and the others taken over by the Buddhists."

Thus the Buddhists gained their first monasteries, stolen from the Bon-Po, without expense to the king. "One result was that many Bon-Po publicly went over to Buddhism. The greater number, however, preferred exile. They hid their holy writings (which had been banned and were ordered to be burnt) wherever they felt they were not likely to be discovered by the King's men—in the

mountains, in the ravines, and even in the monasteries of unsuspecting Buddhist monks. The idea was to save those writings for the benefit of future generations. In later centuries, the rediscovery of these literary treasures played an important role in assembling the Bon-Po canon. ...In this way, according to Bon-Po tradition, the adherents of Bon tried to save their religion from being eradicated. King Khri Srong Ide brtsan [sic] thus failed to destroy the Bon religion altogether.

In view of the repressive measures he took, the Bon-Po led an isolated life, away from the mainstream of the country's spiritual pursuits. And yet they kept up their struggle: they still had the support of powerful Tibetan nobles. The conflict remained more

or less underground during the rest of the reign of Khri Srong, also during the subsequent two reigns, viz the reign of Mu ne brtsan po (797-98 A.D.), and that of Sad nam legs (798-817 A.D.)."¹¹

This is a very different reality to the official Kalachakra legend.

MODERN BUDDHIST INTOLERANCE, PERSECUTION OF MINORITIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Again, these calls to murderous acts in the name of religion or because of a manipulated belief that

sections of the community are evil are all too familiar to us in the west from the historical accounts of 400 years of the Catholic witch-hunts and more recently the Nazi Holocaust.

Similar human right violations are being perpetrated in Dharamsala and around the world by the Buddhists against a recently-shunned shamanic section of their community called the Shugden Buddhists. Before I relate this violent oppression of human rights by the Buddhists I must first give you some background information.

The Fifth Dalai Lama established Nechung Gompa 165(5) for the state oracle who channels the dra-lha (that is to say protective ancestral spirit), of Pe-Har the former war god of the Hor-Mongols who were the bitterest opponents of the pre-Buddhist Tibetans. This was a crafty political manoeuvre by the fifth Dalai Lama, giving a psychological advantage against the Mongols by using the dispossessed spirit of their land against them. Shortly afterwards a second state oracle, an indigenous one, was installed called the Shugden Oracle.

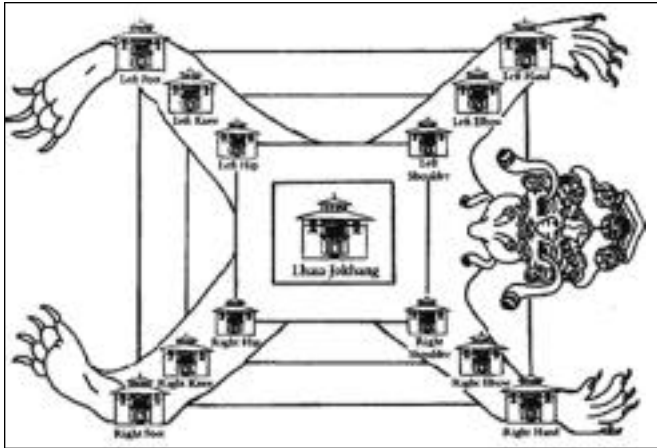
René DeNebesky-Wojkowitz in the final chapter of his monumental piece of research "Oracles and Demons of Tibet" shows the similarities that parallel these state oracles and the traditional indigenous Tibetan shaman.

The original state oracle/shaman was not a Buddhist. The office has been held by both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. The imagery painted on the walls of Nechung Gompa is more than usually fierce and bloody. Its theme is of flayed human skins and souls in torment that possibly depicts, as the exile Kushog claimed, the plight of

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Picture 3: Buddhist Tanka depicting Maha Siddha Virupa and an impaled human (blonde boy)



Picture 4: A diagram of the temples housing the phurbas that nail down Srin-mo, the spirit of the land of Tibet

the indigenous shamans during the 400 years of the Tibetan inquisition.

This is the story of the Shugden Oracle:

"At the time of the fifth Dalai Lama a priest of Drepung monastery named bSod nams grags pa gained great fame through his learning and wisdom. He was held in high esteem by his countrymen and the number of his followers increased steadily. But... the Tibetan Government became jealous of his growing influence and thus decided to put an end to bSod nams grags pa's life... At last, weary of the incessant intrigues and plots, bSod nams grags pa decided to leave the world voluntarily. ...[His] disciple fell on his knees and implored the spirit of his teacher not to retire from the world, but to stay and take revenge on his enemies. Soon after this event great calamities befell the provinces of Central Tibet. ...[A]strologers and oracles soon discovered that... the cause of all the misfortune was the injustice they had done to bSod nams grags pa... [The Tibetan Government] decided to request his spirit to make peace with them, and instead of causing further harm, to become a protective deity of the Yellow Hats. To this the spirit agreed, and under the name... Dorje Shugden, [which means the 'Bellow of the Thunderbolt'¹² or "Noisy Spirit" which coincidentally is the meaning of the word poltergeist.]"

Teenage poltergeist activity was watched for in the indigenous culture of Tibet, as an identifying sign of a new shaman. Dorje Shugden bears the title of "Dra-lha'i-rgyal-chen", "great king of the dra-lha". Gaining the co-operation of the dra-lha is the shaman's main skill. To be the king of the dra-lha would mean that this oracle is the best of the shaman.

It is also interesting to note in this legend that the principle of the admission of misconduct by the Tibetan Government began the path of reconciliation. This fearsome martial spirit continued to prove his political worth and so his office was retained for the entire official 400-year theocratic rule of the Dalai Lamas until March 30, 1996.

On this day, a ban on the worship of Shugden was pronounced by governmental decree issued in Dharamsala. The 14th Dalai Lama branded the Buddhist Shugden cult as "idolatry" and as a "relapse into shamanism".¹³ Again we hear the hollow ring of hypocrisy in these words from the leader of a religion that specialises more than any other in the veneration of images of various deities via the use of stolen shamanic practices.

The leader of this Buddhist sect has been officially declared to be an "enemy of the people."

This appears to indicate that the 1577 anti-shamanist edict still seems to be taken very seriously by the current Dalai Lama.

The Shugdens find themselves victims of a true witch-hunt. They accuse the Dalai Lama of a flagrant breach of human rights and the right to freedom of religion and do not shy from drawing comparisons with the Chinese occupation force and the Catholic Inquisition. Houses belonging to the sect are said to have been illegally searched by masked bands of thugs who then have attacked defenceless Shugden believers. Images and altars to the protective god have been deliberately burned and thrown into rivers.

Dorje Shugden practitioners claim that lists of members of their sect labelled "Enemies Of The People" have been drawn up and pictures of them and their children hung out in public buildings so as to defame them. Followers have been completely refused entry to the offices of the government in exile and they claim that the children of their families no longer have access to the official schools. This is certainly not the behaviour you would expect from a section of the global community that so loudly proclaims its own compassion, non-violence and enlightenment and condemns other governments who behave in this way.

Following a resolution of the Tibetan Cholsum Convention held between August 27 and 31, 1998 an emulation of the accusations tabled against the Chinese government was seen to have been made by the Buddhist government in exile. Shugden followers were unable to travel internationally or draw pensions, state child assistance or social security payments. In the resolution, Tibetans were forbidden to read the writings of the sect and they were called upon to burn them. The accusations are so very similar to those made by the Tibetan Buddhists about the ten years of religious intolerance by the Chinese invaders.



Picture 5: Dorje Shugden Tanka

However, the Buddhist intolerance of these relapsed shamans appears to go a step beyond that. Shortly after this, a militant underground organisation with the name of the "Secret Society for the Destruction of Internal and External Enemies of Tibet" threatened to murder two young lineage holders, the lamas Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, who was only 13 years old at the time and 11-year-old Song Rinpoche, who performed rites in honour of Dorje Shugden. Death threats were made on a Swiss television program, saying "...we will destroy your life and your activities".¹⁴

Ironically, Trijang Rinpoche is held to be the reincarnation of the deceased lama who previously initiated the 14th Dalai Lama into the Shugden cult whilst his teacher. In a document from this group tabled by Shugden followers, it reads:

"Anyone who goes against the policy of the government must be singled out one-pointedly, opposed and given the death penalty. ...As for the reincarnations of Trijang and Song Rinpoche, if they do not stop practicing Dhogyal [Shugden] and contradict the word of H.H. The Dalai Lama, not only will we not be able to respect them, but their life and their activities will suffer destruction. This is our first warning".¹⁵

Whilst a western television crew were filming, a Tibetan monk who cooperated with the reporters received a death threat: "... in seven days you will be dead!"¹⁶

In addition, Dharamsala has exerted vehement psychological pressure on Buddhist centres in the west and forbidden them from performing Shugden rituals.¹⁷

In London, where the sect has around 3000 members, there were protest demonstrations at which pictures of the 14th Dalai Lama were held high with the slogan, "Your Smiles Charm, Your Actions Harm". He was referred to as a "merciless dictator, who oppresses his people more than the Chinese do."¹⁸

These statements are a reference to the Tibetan government in exile again emulating the actions of the Chinese government, in that a misquoted document proved to be enough to arrest all known followers of Shugden in Delhi and illegally imprison them even though they denied participating in any crime whatsoever and no proof could be found. Indeed, despite interrogations lasting weeks by the Indian criminal police, nothing could be proven.¹⁹

A Tibetan tradition claims that Dorje Shugden, the "Bellow of the Thunderbolt" will succeed Pe-har as the head of all 'Jig rten pa'i srung ma once the latter god advances into the rank of deities who stand outside the worldly sphere. Perhaps this recent political manoeuvring and power play within Tibetan Buddhism is because of a fear of loss of status for some, based on this legend.

After reading these reports of the Dorje Shugden affair, a truism sprang to my mind: that power in any society can only be maintained by ruthless means.

About the Author

Dr Shé D'Montford has an honorary doctorate in religion and philosophy, specialising in Tibetan and Hindu Shamanism and ancient warrior codes. In recent years Shé travelled extensively with a former student presenting an authentic recreation of 1600 year-old hermetic magick rituals and has authored many articles on these subjects for many international and national esoteric and new age magazines. Shé has appeared on television and radio and has presented lectures at many festivals. Dr D'Montford will be speaking at the Brisbane NEXUS Conference in September this year. Her book "Unveiling Tibetan Buddhist Propaganda and Atrocities. A Way For Progress In The Tibet/China Conflict", is reviewed in this issue.

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